

THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST and THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The July meeting of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ approved unanimously a "testimony of faith" and postponed for one year final decision on a draft constitution. The Synod also authorized the establishment of a Commission on Christian Unity and Ecumenical Study and Service which will presumably have functions parallel to our own Council on Christian Unity.

What are the implications of recent developments in the United Church for Disciples of Christ? As regards:

Church Structure

The proposed constitution establishes the principle of local church autonomy in matters of policy and property, and representative structure at the national level in matters of program and outreach. Disciples will see some parallel in our own structure, including an implicit representative principle which effectively guides state and national agencies in their programs. Those concerned about the reality of the principle of local autonomy will be reassured by the action of the Synod postponing constitutional approval at the national level until local churches have had extended opportunity for careful study and decision. Disciples may well want to study the draft constitution alongside their own charters, etc., and particularly churches and agencies revising or drawing up new charters.

Affirmation of Faith

The testimony of faith, far from being a test, is dated as "the faith commonly held among us in the words of our time," presupposing revision and reaffirmation in later times. It is recommended to churches for use in worship and study, much as Disciples have used responsive readings and descriptive statements prepared by local churches or state and national committees as to what Disciples generally believe. Local Disciple study groups may

well take the Statement for a profitable evening discussion or series of studies.

Sacraments

The instruction of our own International Convention Assembly that we explore possibilities of closer relationship to the United Church suggests at least two other areas where we should get studies under way. One has to do with the *sacraments*. Baptism, whether by immersion or sprinkling, whether of children or adults, in the United Church is a matter which each local congregation will decide. Transfers of members within that Church, however, may be no less of a problem at some points than it is already among us. Here a recent document made available by the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches provides

excellent material for our study and should help prepare us for a fruitful discussion with the United Church.

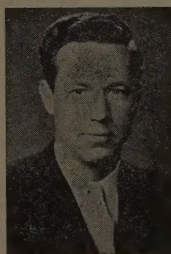
Church Leadership

The combining of administrative executives and of bishops in one church has far-reaching implications. One is reminded of recent efforts of the Anglican Church to separate the bishop's office into two, one for pastoral oversight, the other for business administration. For Disciples there are two levels of questions here: one has to do with names for our leaders, with practical methods of selection and with some measure of authority. A question lying behind these, which we have constantly in discussions with Episcopalians and Orthodox Churches, has to do with specific forms of leadership.

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DR. TOBIAS LEAVES COUNCIL

Dr. Robert Tobias has resigned from his position as associate executive secretary of the Council on Christian



Dr. Tobias

Unity, after five years of outstanding service in this position. As of this fall, Dr. Tobias will be teaching full-time at Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Indiana, where he is professor of Ecumenical Theology and History. He will, however, continue to give some time to the Council until it secures a new man for his position.

Dr. Tobias came to the Council after eight years of ecumenical work overseas. In 1943 he was in France as one of five young people sent by American Churches to do post-war rehabilitation work in association with the French Protestant youth organization, CIMADE. Then for seven years beginning in 1946, Dr. Tobias was on the staff of the World Council

of Churches, becoming Assistant Director of the Department of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees in 1948. His responsibilities with the World Council took him to 25 countries of Europe and the Middle East where he worked closely with Orthodox, Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist, Methodist and other church leaders.

With a broad background of ecumenical experience and deep insights into the ecumenical task facing the churches, Dr. Tobias returned to the United States in 1953. His first year back in this country was spent traveling among churches in the U.S.A. and Canada interpreting the work in which he had been engaged in Europe. Since then he has followed his two-fold assignment as a professor at the seminary and as a member of the staff of the Council on Christian Unity.

Under the leadership of Dr. Tobias, the Council on Christian Unity has expanded and deepened its whole pro-

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AROUND THE WORLD

Argentina

Some 300 representatives of six churches recently held the first major ecumenical meeting in Argentina. The guest speaker was Bishop Sante Uberto Barbieri, bishop of the Central Conference of the Methodist Church in Argentina and a president of the World Council of Churches.

Represented were the Anglican Church, the Syrian Orthodox Church, the United Lutheran Church, the German Evangelical Synod of the River Plate, the Salvation Army and the Methodist Church. The group is now planning the organization of the Friends of the WCC Association.

U. S. Lutheranism

Pastors and parishes of the American Lutheran Church have voted by a margin of nearly thirty to one in favor of merging with the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The vote is the last constitutional requirement for effecting the merger since no reference was necessary for the other two bodies.

Each of the bodies will now hold final conventions in April, 1960, followed immediately by the constituting convention. The new church which will be called the American Lutheran Church, will have 2,200,000 members, and will be the second largest Lutheran body in the U. S.

The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod has also unanimously called for talks looking towards a "God-pleasing unity and fellowship" with this new American Lutheran Church.

A further move toward unity of Lutherans in the U.S. is indicated by the recent expressed preference of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church for complete unity with the three bodies with which it plans merger.

This new church, as yet unnamed, involves the merger of the Augustana Lutheran Church, American Evangelical Lutheran Church and the United Lutheran Church in America. It will have about 3,000,000 members and will be the largest Lutheran body in the country.

Europe

The first Ecumenical Youth Assembly in Europe is to be held in July

1960 at Lausanne, Switzerland. The Assembly will be held under the auspices of the Youth Department of the WCC in cooperation with national ecumenical youth councils in Europe. An estimated 500 young people are expected to attend.

Goal of the assembly will be to provide an ecumenical encounter and to stimulate thinking and action in the light of the Christian faith on the issues which youth are facing today in Europe.

Germany

Crowds estimated at upwards of 370,000 persons gathered in Munich, Sunday, August 16th, for the final session of the 1959 German Evangelical Kirchentag.

The Kirchentag was the ninth in the now-famous laymen's rallies of the German Churches started in 1949. It was the first held in a predominantly Roman Catholic City.

Highlight of the five-day programme were meetings of working groups on ten sub-themes of the main theme, "Ye Shall Be My People." Participants met in daily sessions for lectures and discussions on such topics as the State, Economic Life, What is Man?, Mass Media, the Word, and the Christian Family.

England

The Liturgical Commission of the Church of England has recommended adult baptism as "a normal New Testament procedure" and proposed that infant baptism be administered only in "modified form."

Further, it suggested, since baptism and confirmation are closely linked in the New Testament, the two sacraments should be administered at the same service.

The commission said that "all of this would be in line with both the Primitive and Reformed tradition."

Christian Unity Newsletter: Issued quarterly to members and friends of the Council by the Council On Christian Unity (an association of Disciples of Christ for the promotion of Christian unity, for ecumenical fellowship and service), 222 S. Downey Ave., Indianapolis 7, Indiana, U. S. A. Robert Tobias and Robert Heckard, editors.

TOBIAS RESIGNATION

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gram of work and the Disciples have become more vitally involved in the ecumenical movement. During the years of his leadership, the Council has developed programs of inter-church aid, fraternal workers and exchanges, ecumenical scholarships, and other areas of ecumenical service. It has also developed an extensive and intensive program of ecumenical study, including several theological study commissions and a program of local church studies.

Dr. Tobias has also contributed much to the Council's task of ecumenical interpretation. As editor of the Council's *Ecumenical Studies Series* and *Christian Unity Newsletter* he has kept before Disciples some of the major ecumenical issues and problems and informed them of new accomplishments in unity. He has also been largely responsible for the production of many other materials for ecumenical study and interpretation, including an *Ecumenical Studies Guide for Local Churches*, a film-strip on unity developments, and many special materials for the 1958-59 Year of Emphasis on unity. He is also the editor of a book of sermons, *Preaching On Christian Unity*.

In addition to producing much literature, Dr. Tobias has carried on many conferences and consultations both among Disciples and leaders of other churches and has given much of his personal time to the cause of unity in addresses, lectureships, and small study and action groups throughout the country.

While serving the Council, Dr. Tobias has continued to carry responsibilities in other dimensions of the ecumenical movement. He was a delegate to the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Evanston in 1954, and since that time has been a member of the Council's Divisional Committee on Ecumenical Action. Following the outbreak of mob violence against minority groups in Turkey in 1955, the World Council named Dr. Tobias as one of five European and American churchmen to go to Istanbul to visit the Ecumenical Patriarch and take a message of fellowship and concern from Christians around the world.

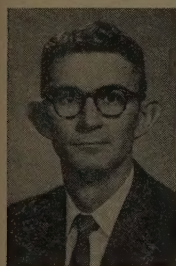
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TWO ANNUAL ECUMENICAL SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Two Disciples have been awarded scholarships for the 8th Session of the Graduate School of Ecumenical Studies, October 1, 1959 to February 15, 1960, at Bossey, Switzerland. They are Dr. J. Daniel Joyce, newly appointed Professor of New Testament at Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Indiana, and Mr. John Wesley Divine, Jr., student at the Graduate Seminary of Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma.

These two annual grants are part of the ecumenical scholarship program of the Council on Christian Unity. The purpose of the scholarships is to help prepare younger Disciples for ecumenical leadership through study and experience in an ecumenical setting.

Dr. Joyce is the third recipient of an annual scholarship for Disciple ministers and laymen, financed by the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation of Columbus, Indiana. Mr. Joyce, who is 38 years of



age, holds B. A. degrees from Johnson Bible College and Lynchburg College, M.A. and B.D. degrees from the School of Religion, Butler University, and a Ph.D. degree from Yale University.

During his college and seminary work, Mr. Joyce held student pastorates at First Baptist Church, Ansonia, Conn., Fairview Christian Church, Lynchburg, Va., and Brooklyn Christian Church, Brooklyn, Indiana. For the last five years Mr. Joyce has served as pastor of Hanover Avenue Christian Church in Richmond, Va. Upon his return from Europe, Dr. Joyce will take up his new position as Professor of New Testament at Christian Theological Seminary.

Dr. Joyce is presently serving as a member of the Disciples Commission on Biblical Theology. He has served as chairman of a theological study committee of the World Convention of Churches of Christ and as leader of a pre-Oberlin study group on the theme "The Nature of the Unity We Seek." He has also represented the Disciples at various ecumenical meetings.

A weekly contributor to *The Christian Evangelist-Front Rank*, Dr. Joyce has become well-known for his "Meaning for Today" comments on the International Scripture Lesson Series. While in Richmond he has also done a considerable amount of radio and television work. Not only has he telecast the Sunday Morning Worship Service of Hanover Church on various occasions, but he has also helped with the production of several devotional films, and was for more than a year the author and teacher of a weekly half-hour television program, "Lessons for Living."

Mrs. Joyce, who will accompany her husband to Europe, holds a B.A. degree from Butler University and has also been an active leader in the Church. She became well-known in the American Baptist Convention for her culinary art by reason of a feature picture-illustrated story in *Crusader*, American Baptist Newsmagazine, November, 1952. The Joyces led the Ansonia Connecticut Church in the building of a new parsonage which was chosen by the magazines a model home for a modern minister. In addition to their work at Bossey, the Joyces will take a short travel-study excursion through Europe.

Mr. Divine is the fourth recipient of the annual scholarship for seminary students. Funds for this scholarship are provided on a rotating basis by Disciple seminaries. This year's scholarship was given by the Graduate Seminary of Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma, where Mr. Divine is a student.



Mr. Divine, who is 24 years of age, is a native of Perry, Oklahoma. He received his A.B. degree from Phillips University in 1957 with a major in math and physics. Since then he has been working on a B.D. degree in the Graduate School of Phillips and has one year yet to complete.

For the past 2½ years, Mr. Divine has served as director of student work at University Place Christian Church, Enid, Okla. Prior to this, he was

Sports Editor for the *Perry Daily Journal* and also worked on the staff of *The Reporter*, an Enid newspaper.

Having been active in the DSF program, Mr. Divine has served as president both locally and regionally. Eventually, he plans on working either in the pastoral ministry or as a teacher in higher education.

Mrs. Divine, Wendy Matson before their marriage in May, 1959, will accompany her husband to the Graduate Institute. She is from Frankston, Victoria, Australia, and has completed her junior year at Phillips University.

Prior to attending Bossey, the couple are participating in an ecumenical work camp in Ellierode, Germany, August 7 to September 6. They also plan to remain in Europe for the World Convention at Edinburgh in August 1960.

"The Ministry and the Ministries of the Church" is the theme of this year's study at the Graduate School of Ecumenical Studies. The theme will be dealt with on a Biblical basis as well as from the standpoints of the various church traditions. Also to be considered are the questions of the place and responsibility of lay people in their churches and an adequate training of lay people for their ministry.

TOBIAS RESIGNATION

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In 1956, Dr. Tobias was decorated by King Paul of Greece with the Cross of the Commander of the Royal Order of Phoenix in recognition of special services rendered to that country during and since recent wars and earthquakes.

Dr. Tobias has become well known for his ecumenical leadership in both this country and throughout the world. In receiving his resignation with deep regret, the Executive Committee of the Council on Christian Unity expressed its appreciation for the excellence of his service and the prophetic leadership given to the cause of Christian Unity, and the satisfaction that the Council would have the benefit of his advice and judgment in the years to come.

A personnel committee has been appointed by the Executive Committee to search for a successor.

SPECIAL OBSERVANCE of "THE DECLARATION AND ADDRESS"

A sesqui-centennial convocation in honor of "The Declaration and Address" is to be held at Bethany College, Bethany, West Virginia, on October 25, 1959. This special observance which will take place on the last day of the West Virginia State Convention is jointly sponsored by Bethany College, the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, and the Council on Christian Unity. Dr. Perry E. Gresham, President of Bethany College, is in charge of the arrangements.

Following is the program as announced by Dr. Gresham:

2:30 p. m.—Address: "An American Formulation of the Christian Message" by Dr. Howard E. Short, Edi-

tor, *The Christian Evangelist-Front Rank*.

3:30 p. m.—Address: "The Significance of 'The Declaration and Address' for the Reunion of Christendom" by a Church of Christ (non-instrumental) representative yet to be selected.

6:30 p. m.—Convocation Dinner at Phillips Hall.

8:30—Address: "The Present Outlook for Christian Unity" by Dr. Ronald Osborn, Dean, Christian Theological Seminary.

The convocation will be open to the public. Members of the Council on Christian Unity and the Board of Directors are especially urged to attend.

ESSAY WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Mr. William T. Nowlan was presented as the winner of the seminary division of the 1958-59 Year of Emphasis Essay Contest, at the Sunday evening session of the Denver Assembly of the International Convention. He was awarded a check for \$100 and a set of 7 ecumenical books for his winning essay on, "Sociological Problems Involved in the Proposed Union of The Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ." The presentation and awards were made by Dr. W. J. Jarman, President of the Council on Christian Unity which sponsored the contest.

Mr. Nolan received his B.D. degree from Yale Divinity School in June and is presently serving as Associate Pastor of the First Christian Church, Mansfield, Ohio. Mr. Nowlan's home church is the West Side Christian Church, Topeka, Kansas. He received his A.B. degree from Phillips University.

The second place award of \$75 and a set of books went to Mr. Robert Kendall for his essay on "Philosophical Issues Involved in Christian Unity." Mr. Kendall is a B.D. student at Christian Theological Seminary and minister of East Street Christian Church, Carthage, Indiana.

The recipient of the third place award of \$50 and a set of books was Mr. Daniel C. Garrison for his essay titled, "Where Now Disciples—An Ex-

amination of the Plea and Calling of Disciples of Christ in the Light of the Present Ecumenical Situation." Mr. Garrison is a B.D. student at the College of the Bible in Lexington.

"Honorable mention" awards of sets of 7 ecumenical books were also made to the following students:

Mr. V. G. Alexander, Brite College of the Bible: "Social Mobility and Christian Unity."

Mr. Donald W. J. Anderson, Pacific School of Religion: "Why the First Ecumenical Movement Failed."

Mr. James E. Kohls, Christian Theological Seminary: "Disciples of Christ and Christian Unity."

Mr. William R. Norris, Christian Theological Seminary: "Disciples of Christ Plead for Christian Unity."

Mr. John M. Stanley, Pacific School of Religion: "Toward an Understanding of Protestant Unity."

The purpose of the essay contest was to encourage seminary students to engage in the study of some of the current issues and problems under ecumenical discussion in order to better prepare them for their future ministry, whether it be among Disciples or within the context of the larger ecumenical movement. The general theme for the essays was "Contemporary Issues of Christian Unity." The essays were judged by a panel appointed by the Council on Christian Unity.

URGE STUDY OF MEMBERSHIP PRACTICES

The 1959 Convention of Christian Churches of Northern California-Western Nevada passed the following resolution urging the study of practices of transferring membership:

WHEREAS our Brotherhood was born out of a zeal for unity among professed Christians, and

WHEREAS we have affirmed through the years that members of other Churches are Christians, testifying to this affirmation by fellowshiping with them in many ways both formal and informal, by recognizing their ministry, by practicing inclusive Communion, while often denying to many of them the privilege of transfer of membership, and

WHEREAS this frequent disparity between affirmation and practice appears to place us in a contradictory position thus tending to obscure our witness to Christian unity, and

WHEREAS the present diversity of practice within the Brotherhood concerning the transfer of membership is closely related to this apparent contradiction,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Convention of Christian Churches of Northern California-Western Nevada, urge individuals and Congregations to give prayerful study to our practices concerning the transfer of membership into our congregations.

UNITED CHURCH

(Continued from page 1)

Most of us might agree that there is a leadership of the church, a "watching over," which is necessary in some form for the church's continued life and welfare. But whether this leadership must take one particular form, or many, and on what basis, are questions we will want to study. Here the documents produced by a group discussing union between Lutherans in India and the Church of South India is a good starter.

Local Encounter and Study

These are areas where we need to do some intensive study, soon and locally, in order to converse intelligently with our friends in the United Church. Above all, however, is the imperative for each of us to get acquainted and to indicate our solidarity with our neighbors and Christian brethren in that Church, whatever the future may hold for our organizational relationships.